THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) Four user evaluation flight-tests of indigenously developed Pilotless Target Aircraft—"Lakshya" were successfully carried out during 11 to 17 April 1994 at Interim Test Range, Balasore. The main objectives of these trials were performance demonstration, re-usability, weapon engagement by Air Force & Army, miss-distance scoring and land recovery demonstration. Satisfactory performance was obtained with regard to these objectives.

(b) Firm orders for "Lakshya" for initial quantities are expected from Services around and 1994, after which a limited series production would be undertaken. Deliveries would commence 24 months after placement of orders. HAL has been designated as the nodal production agency for "Lakshya". Bulk production is expected to follow when the transfer of technology phase is completed.

Implementation of Manual Commission's recommendations in Defence services

6968. SHRI TINDIVANAM G. VENKATRAMAN:
SHRI J. S. RAJU:
SHRI MISA R. GANESAN:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the norms of Mandal Commission for reservation to backward communities and most backward communities are being followed in defence selections and appointments; and

(b) if not, the reasons therefor and whether Government propose to evolve schemes to implement the said norms?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) and (b) Recruitment to the Armed Forces is open to all Indian nationals irrespective of caste, creed, community, religion or region. The endeavour has been to provide free and equal opportunity to all sections of the population to join the Armed Forces and render service in accordance with the ideals of secularism, democracy and social justice.

In order to maintain the highest standards of operational efficiency, appointments and selections to the Armed Forces have been made strictly on merit and no reservation on the basis of caste, community, religion, area or class is laid down.

Cadre review in MES

6969. PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the cadres where they have not been reviewed or where reviewed, action has not been taken on the recommendation;

(b) whether no cadre review has been made so far in the clerical cadre of MES and the staff of the MES are on agitation for a long time; and

(c) the steps taken to carry out cadre reviews in all the cadres expeditiously and on the recommendations in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) There are multitude of cadres under Ministry of Defence. Since many cadre authorities were not fulfilling the conditions of 10 per cent cut in strength, functional justification and full matching savings for cadre review, acceptable cadre review proposals could not be initiated by them. Wherever these conditions are fulfilled, further action of examination of the cadre review recommendations on merit is undertaken in the Ministry and orders passed accordingly.

(b) The initial cadre review proposal of MES clerical cadre was examined and found to involve repercussions in other Departments since clerical cadre is a common category MES authorities have accordingly submitted fresh proposals.